

REMARKS

Claims 1-24 remain pending in the application. The claims have been amended to further clarify the subject matter regarded as the invention.

This amendment is to expedite prosecution and should not be construed as acquiescence in any ground of rejection. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute the originally filed claims in the future.

Rejections Under 35 USC 103

The claims have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maxwell et al. (US Patent No. 5,675,784) in view of Blinn et al. (US Patent No. 5,999,914). The rejection is respectfully traversed. Applicants submit that the claims of the instant invention are non-obvious and patentable over the claims of the cited art.

The claims, as amended, recite a method, system, or apparatus for “storing the product data, the product data for each product including both a manufacturer SKU that identifies the product and at least one customer SKU that identifies the product, each customer SKU being associated with a customer for which the product data is being stored for subsequent distribution to the customer, wherein the customer has requested distribution or transmission of product data for a plurality of products to the customer for use in a catalog, the product data for each of the plurality of products including the customer SKU associated with the customer for that product, wherein the stored product data is suitable for use by the customer in an electronic catalog, the customer being a manufacturer, retailer, or distributor of the product, thereby enabling at least one customer to request distribution or transmission of product data for a particular product.”

Applicant respectfully asserts that the claims, as amended, are patentable over the cited references. Neither of the cited references, separately or in combination, discloses or suggests a system for capturing and distributing/transmitting data to a customer for use in a catalog, as claimed. In other words, the customer as claimed

(manufacturer, retailer or distributor of products) is a customer of a business or service that captures and provides (e.g., distributes or transmits) that product data to the customer for use in a catalog. Thus, each customer has requested distribution or transmission of product data for a plurality of products, each of the products being identified by a customer SKU to the customer. In addition, since at least one customer SKU is stored in association with each product, the system enables product data for each product to be captured and distributed/transmitted to at least one customer. Moreover, at least one customer may request distribution/transmission of product data for a particular product to that customer. Thus product data for one product may be captured for distribution to one or more customers.

With respect to claims 1, 22, 23, and 24, as amended, Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's assertion that Maxwell teaches storing both a manufacturer SKU that identifies a product and a customer SKU that identifies the product. Specifically, Maxwell neither discloses nor suggests "storing the product data, the product data including both a manufacturer SKU that identifies the product and at least one customer SKU that identifies the product, each customer SKU being associated with a customer for which the product data is being stored for subsequent distribution to the customer, wherein the stored product data is suitable for use by the customer in an electronic catalog, the customer being a manufacturer, retailer, or distributor of the products." (Emphasis added). Rather, Maxwell describes a single identifier as typically used to identify a product.

Imamura discloses an electronic shopping system including an electronic mall server. The electronic mall server is designed to include a shop database defined by an electronic shop for a virtual shop. While Imamura does disclose a system for defining electronic catalogue data, Imamura discloses merely producing an electronic catalogue (e.g., see col.7 of Imamura). Specifically, Imamura requires that the producer of the catalogue input the product information via a screen to an input device. (See col. 7, lines 1-67). As a result, Imamura teaches away from a system, business, or service that captures data for distribution or transmission to "customers" who wish to use that product data in their catalogues. Thus, the combination of the cited references would be inoperable for the intended purpose. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1, 22, 23, and 24 are allowable. As Claims 2-21 are dependent upon Claim 1, Applicants submit that these claims are also allowable.

The dependent claims further recite additional limitations that are not further disclosed in Maxwell. For example, with respect to claims 2 and 3, the Examiner refers to col. 6, lines 15-18 and lines 45-48. However, the cited portions of Maxwell neither discloses nor suggests a data entry template that “includes a listing of potential values associated with each of the attributes in the category of the classified product, wherein the listing of potential values identify values that are selectable as values for the associated attribute.” For instance, an attribute may be speed or size. As recited in claim 2, each attribute has an associated list of potential values that may be selected as a value for the attribute. The cited portion of Maxwell merely discloses consistent description format and the data architecture, enabling a variety of search alternatives once data has been stored. See col. 6, lines 45-57. However, Maxwell fails to disclose a process or manner of providing such a list of values from which attribute values may be selected for data values that are to be entered (e.g., prior to storing the values). The Examiner further cites FIG. 13, steps 163 and 146, as well as col. 6, lines 27-58. While FIG. 13 step 163 specifies a “sub class lease pricing tier” and step 146 specifies a “spec value ranking group,” the meaning of these blocks is unclear. In addition, col. 6, lines 27-58 indicates that while a manufacturer is chosen from a selection list, the family, model, part number, universal product code (UPC), and manufacturer’s suggested retail price (MSRP) are entered”. (Emphasis added.) For instance, as shown in FIG. 10, a field is made available for entry of a “Price.” A quantity is entered, but is not selected from a list of potential quantities. Rather, the user must manually enter this quantity. As such, Maxwell teaches away from providing a data entry template, “wherein the data entry template includes a listing of potential values associated with each of the attributes” as recited in claim 2.

Moreover, with respect to claim 3, neither of the references discloses repeating the listing of potential values for the classified product when the attribute group associated with the classified product is indicated to be a repeating group in the data model. Although col. 6, lines 15-18 of Maxwell disclose a loop that is used to “create” components, Maxwell fails to disclose or suggest repeating a listing of potential values....when the attribute group associated with the classified product is indicated to be a repeating group in the data model. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2 and 3 are allowable over the cited art.

Similarly, with respect to claims 4, 5 and 15, Applicant was unable to find a reference to a possible value list associated with each attribute that identifies values

that are selectable as values for the associated attribute, where each of the attributes has at least one of the values in the associated possible value list. Rather col. 7, lines 60-67 of Maxwell appear to indicate that the data structure may store values, not that such values may be selected from a possible value list. Similarly, with respect to claim 5, Maxwell neither discloses nor suggests a possible unit list associated with each attribute, where the possible unit list includes units that are selectable. Rather, as indicated in FIG. 8 of Maxwell, it appears that the units (e.g., Hz, MHz) are not selected from a list of units, but are presented in the component description. As stated above, the user may merely enter a quantity associated with the static description. Accordingly, Maxwell teaches away from the invention of claims 4, 5, and 15.

Similarly, with respect to claim 16, the Examiner cites col. 5, lines 43-52 of Maxwell, which states that “[c]omponents have attributes, and attributes have specification values associated with them.” However, Maxwell neither discloses nor suggests classifying the product according to a data model having one or more classes, wherein each of the classes is arranged to identify one or more associated categories and each of the categories is arranged to identify an associated attribute group having one or more attributes, each attribute having an associated possible value list that identifies values that are selectable as values for the associated attribute. Moreover Maxwell fails to disclose or suggest selecting at least one of the values in the associated possible value list for selected attributes in the associated attribute group. Furthermore, Maxwell neither discloses nor suggests inputting the selected values for the product to the system product data file. In fact, Maxwell suggests that each attribute has a single value associated therewith rather than a list of selectable values. As such, Maxwell teaches away from the claimed invention. Accordingly, Maxwell teaches away from the invention of claim 16.

In addition, with respect to claims 12-14 and 20-21, although col. 5, lines 30-42 and 53-55 of Maxwell disclose defining a group for “similar kinds of components” and groups similar types of products, such as “hardware” and “computer systems,” Maxwell neither discloses nor suggests linking to or identifying one or more related products that are recommended as compatible with the product as recited in claims 12 and 20. Similarly, Maxwell neither discloses nor suggests linking to platform compatibility information associated with the product indicating one or more platforms that are compatible with the product, as recited in claim 13. Moreover, with respect to claim 21, the Examiner cites col. 5, lines 10-12 of Maxwell, which

illustrates “but one example of hardware on which the subject invention may be implemented.” However, Maxwell neither discloses nor suggests “inputting to the system product data file platform compatibility information associated with the product indicating one or more platforms that are compatible with the product.” In other words, the presently claimed invention enables various platforms to be identified that are compatible with each product for which data is stored. The combination of Maxwell and Imamura would fail to provide this desired functionality. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 12-14 and 20-21 are non-obvious and patentable over Maxwell in view of Imamura. Applicants therefore respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection under 35 USC 103.

Conclusion

The Applicants respectfully maintain that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance for this Application from the Examiner. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,

BEYER, WEAVER & THOMAS, LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elise', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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